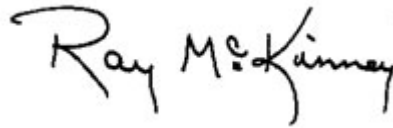


ISSUE DATE: 04/17/06

PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P06-07



FROM: RAY McKINNEY
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SUBJECT: Emergency Mine Evacuation – Emergency Temporary Standard

Who needs this information?

Mine operators, miners' representatives, independent contractors, mine safety equipment manufacturers, and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel need this information.

Why is MSHA issuing this bulletin?

This bulletin informs the mining community that MSHA is providing two volumes of a Compliance Guide on its website www.msha.gov. Go to the web site, choose Compliance Info and then Compliance Guides found under Compliance Tools. There are two volumes of this guide to assist mine operators in complying with the recently promulgated Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS). The first volume provides a link to templates.

What is the background for this bulletin?

In response to the recent mine accidents at the Sago and Aracoma Alma No. 1 coal mines, MSHA determined that new accident notification, safety, and training standards were necessary to protect miners from being exposed to grave danger when a mine accident occurs. Accordingly, an ETS was published pursuant to section 101(b) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 on March 9, 2006 [[Federal Register](#), vol. 71,

no. 46, pp 12252-12271] and became effective on that date to address immediate accident notification, additional SCSRs for escape, lifelines in escapeways, and training.

What are the main points of this bulletin?

The ETS provides clarification of the "immediate" notification of accidents that affects all mines. New provisions also address miners' access to additional SCSRs, lifelines, and training on all the new equipment for underground coal mines. Even though the ETS became effective immediately, the mine operator cannot implement all of the changes at once because various provisions require the mine operator to develop training plans or programs of instruction and purchase equipment. MSHA, therefore, has provided a timeframe for implementing these provisions. In addition, MSHA is providing guidance on implementing all the ETS provisions on its website. Go to the web site, choose Compliance Info and then Compliance Guides found under Compliance Tools. There are two volumes of this compliance guide. Volume 2 will provide more guidance on this.

The first new provision concerns the reporting of accidents to MSHA under Part 50. All "accidents," as defined in 30 C.F.R. §50.2(h), must be immediately reported to MSHA. The ETS clarifies "immediately" as "at once without delay and within 15 minutes" upon determining an accident has occurred. To comply with the ETS, a mine operator must act right away as circumstances permit, and such action must take place within 15 minutes.

The new provisions under §75.1714 require that a coal mine operator must provide each miner with one additional SCSR device that is readily accessible. These stored SCSRs must be conspicuously marked. These additional SCSR devices may be stored on mantrips and mobile equipment that are used to enter and exit the mine, if the mantrips and mobile equipment stay at the section. This additional SCSR is intended to provide necessary oxygen for instances where additional time is needed to effect a successful evacuation such as traversing thick smoke and assisting injured miners. This additional SCSR will also provide necessary oxygen in instances where the previously required SCSR does not function as required.

When a single SCSR is unable to provide sufficient oxygen to evacuate the mine, additional SCSR devices must be stored in both the primary and alternate escapeways. If SCSR devices are stored in the escapeways, the mine operator must submit an outby SCSR storage plan to the appropriate Coal Mine Safety and Health District Manager by April 10, 2006. Also, by that date, these additional SCSRs must be in place or the operator must evidence a good faith effort to comply, such as by a valid contract or purchase order for the SCSRs.

The new training provisions provide an integrated training approach so miners will have the skills to evacuate a mine during an emergency. This enhanced training

approach requires more frequent "hands-on" training and actual drills in evacuating the mine. For Part 48, MSHA requires that all persons, before entering an underground coal mine, have the skills to don and transfer all SCSRs used in that mine.

Once a miner starts working in a coal mine, the mine operator must provide actual "hands-on" training for donning and transferring of self-rescue devices as part of the evacuation drill required in § 75.1502. This provision also increases the frequency of SCSR training from once a year to at least four times a year because the training is part of the mine emergency evacuation drills. Included in these evacuation drills is training in the location and use of directional lifelines or equivalent devices, mine emergency scenarios, and stored SCSRs. The mine operator must require the miners to travel the escapeways and to physically locate the lifelines and stored SCSRs.

Before implementing this training, the mine operator must submit a revised Part 48 training plan and a revised program of instruction for 30 CFR § 75.1502(d) to the appropriate District Manager for approval by April 10, 2006. In its Compliance Assistance guide, MSHA has provided templates for Part 48 training plans and guidance and templates to assist the mine operator in developing scenarios for the four types of mine emergencies. These can be found at:

<http://www.msha.gov/REGS/COMPLIAN/Guides/MineEvacETS/MineEvacETSComplianceGuide.asp>.

The final provisions, under § 75.380(d) and § 75.381(c), require continuous directional lifelines in the primary and alternative escapeways of all underground coal mines. These lifelines must be marked with reflective devices and tactile directional devices to aid evacuation in limited visibility conditions. Escapeway SCSR storage locations must be attached to these lifelines. By April 10, 2006, these lifelines must be installed or the operator must evidence a good faith effort to comply, such as by a valid contract or purchase order for lifeline materials.

What is MSHA's authority for this Program Information Bulletin?

Section 101(b) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 and 30 CFR Parts 48, 50, § 75.380(d), § 75.381(c), § 75.1502, and § 75.1714.

Who is the contact person for this bulletin?

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Is this information bulletin on the Internet?

This Program Information Bulletin may be viewed on the World Wide Web by accessing the MSHA Home Page www.msha.gov and then choosing "Compliance Info" under the "Compliance Assistance" menu, then choosing "Program Information Bulletins." The ETS rule and compliance guides may be located on the MSHA Home Page under **Emergency Mine Evacuation.**

Who will receive this bulletin?

Program Policy Manual Holders
Miners' Representatives
Mine Operators
Independent Contractors
Mine Safety Equipment Manufacturers